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Arthur Walker Defense Aims to Show He Had No Intent to Hurt U.S.

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NORFOLK, Va., June 18 — Arthur J. Walker pleaded not guilty today to charges that he had acted as a paid collaborator with his brother John A. Walker Jr. in spying for the Soviet Union.

Lawyers for Arthur Walker said his trial defense would be that "he never did anything intentionally to injure the United States or aid a foreign country."

Judge J. Clavitt Clark Jr., who will preside, set a tentative date of Aug. 5 for the start of a trial by jury in Federal District Court here.

Samuel W. Meekins Jr., one of Mr. Walker's court-appointed defense lawyers, later told reporters on the courthouse steps: "I think we are going to have to start separating in everyone's mind Arthur Walker from John Walker. I don't know what John did, but Arthur is in a different ball game here." The Federal Bureau of Investigation has said that John Walker was the leader of an espionage ring that also included his son, Michael, and a friend, Jerry A. Whitworth.

Charges in Indictment

The indictment of Arthur Walker, Mr. Meekins said, charges only two offenses, "the most recent in 1962 and involving only 'confidential' information." The confidential classification for information is the least stringent grade.

Mr. Meekins suggested that the defense would rely in part on the increasingly reported manipulative power of John Walker. Without elaborating, Mr. Meekins predicted that his client's trial would provide "an interesting story."

Commenting on the Government's charge in the indictment of Arthur Walker that for nearly five years he engaged in a "knowing conspiracy" with his brother to obtain classified documents from his job at the VSE Corporation, a Navy engineering and ship maintenance contractor here, Mr. Meekins said, "We're going to attack that very strongly."

"No one has linked one piece of that information with the Russians," Mr. Meekins said.

At this morning's 15-minute arraignment of Mr. Walker, a 50-year-old retired lieutenant commander in the Navy, Mr. Meekins and his co-counsel, J. Brian Donnelly, told Judge Clark that they would seek in pretrial motions to suppress as evidence a confession of espionage that agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation have sworn in testimony and in affidavits that they obtained from Arthur Walker on May 24.

That was five days after John Walker's arrest and five days before Arthur Walker's arrest. F.B.I. agents testified at a hearing last week, at which Arthur Walker was denied bail, that he made his statement to them voluntarily after waiving in writing his right to remain silent and to have a lawyer present. On June 3, the court here appointed Mr. Meekins and Mr. Donnelly as public defenders for Arthur Walker.